

Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-02

INFO OCT-01 AF-02 ISO-00 /005 R

66011

DRAFTED BY: IO/IEP:LEKAHN:JPS

APPROVED BY: IO/IEP:RAPOOLE

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R 160653Z SEP 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 229278

FOR US DELEGATION

REF: STATE 226324, STATE 227263

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO USUN NEW YORK, ASUNCION,
BOGOTA, BRASILIA, BUENOS AIRES, CARACAS, MEXICO, PANAMA,
SANTIAGO FROM LIMA SEP 8:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 8078

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UN, ECLA, SENV, OCON

SUBJECT: ECIA PREPARATORY MEETING FOR UN WATER CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 208317 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: LATINS GENERALLY QUITE INTERESTED IN WATER
CONFERENCE, WITH BRAZIL BEING NOTABLE EXCEPTION. ECLA
SECRETARIAT AND ARGENTINES ACTIVE IN CORRIDOR LOBBYING.
LATINS GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH PREPARATIONS TO DATE,
ALTHOUGH WE HAVE IMPRESSION OF LACK OF STRONG LEADERSHIP
ON PART OF CONFERENCE SECRETARY GENERAL. PERSPECTIVES
FOR MAL DEL PLATA AT THIS POINT NOT BAD, BUT WE WOULD GUESS
THAT SOME CONTENTIOUS ISSUES WILL FIND THEIR WAY IN.
END SUMMARY.

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2. UNCLASSIFIED SEPTTEL REPORTS MEETING HIGHLIGHTS.

3. REGIONAL INTEREST IN MAR DEL PLATA CONFERENCE, AS EVIDENCED BY LIMA PREPARATORY MEETING, IS GENERALLY QUITE HIGH AND ORIENTED IN POSITIVE WAY TOWARD GLOBAL WATER PROBLEMS. LEADING CONTRIBUTORS TO AND PARTICIPANTS IN REGIONAL MEETING WERE VENEZUELA, ARGENTINA, PERU AND MEXICO, WITH SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS ALSO FROM COLOMBIA, BOLIVIA, JAMAICA, AND PARAGUAY. BRAZIL (WHICH HAS NOT YET DECLARED WHETHER IT WILL GO TO MAR DEL PLATA) MADE NO PLENARY STATEMENT, BUT DID WORK ACTIVELY ON RECOMMENDATIONS AND MADE PLENARY STATEMENT ENDORSING PARAGUAYAN-PREPARED PREAMBLE.

4. BRAZIL-ARGENTINA SHARED RIVER BASIN DISPUTE WAS UNDERLYING PRINCIPAL PROBLEM, WHICH NEVER SURFACED IN MEETING DISCUSSIONS. BRAZIL HAD COME TO LIMA FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD BANGKOK LANGUAGE, AND THIS WAS THE FINAL BASIS FOR COMPROMISE AGREEMENT. BRAZILIANS MAINTAINED VERY LOW PROFILE THROUGHOUT MEETING.

5. VENEZUELAN DELEGATION WAS MOST ACTIVE IN DRAFTING OF RECOMMENDATIONS. VENEZUELA AND COLOMBIA BOTH ACKNOWLEDGED SUPPORT THEY HAD RECEIVED FROM DR. CANO IN PREPARING THEIR WATER LEGISLATION. PERU, IN TURN, HAS RECEIVED SUCH HELP FROM VENEZUELA.

6. MOST ACTIVE AND EFFECTIVE WORKERS BEHIND THE SCENES WERE ECLA SECRETARIAT, PARTICULARLY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY IGLESIAS, WHO WAS PRESENT FOR FIRST 3 AND 1/2 DAYS OF MEETING. HIS EFFORTS AT HEADING OFF EXPLOSIVE CONTENTIOUS ISSUES WERE LARGELY SUCCESSFUL, WITH NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF PANAMA-U.S. CANAL ISSUE, BUT EVEN HERE, ISSUE WAS SUCCESSFULLY KEPT OUT OF WORKING GROUP, AND THUS ACTION PROPOSAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO WATER CONFERENCE INCLUDE NOT REPEAT NOT EVEN A CLAUSE ON SOVEREIGNTY OVER ONE'S OWN WATER RESOURCES. (THERE IS A CLAUSE RECOMMENDING, IN GENERAL, PUBLIC MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES.)

7. U.S. DEL MAINTAINED LOW POSTURE IN MEETINGS AS SUG-CONFIDENTIAL

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GESTED REFTEL. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, WE MADE OPENING STATEMENT; ONE INTERVENTION IN WORKING GROUP IN RESPONSE TO CUBAN ANTI-US/OAS DIATRIBE; STATED QUALIFICATION ON CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATIONS; STATED OUR RESERVATIONS ON PANAMIAN RESOLUTION; AND ASKED TO HAVE LATTER INCLUDED IN RECORD. BEHIND THE SCENES, WE URGED THAT MEETING (AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAR DEL PLATA) BE KEPT ON GLOBAL ISSUES, MAKING THIS POINT CLEARLY TO IGLESIAS, MAGEED,

AND VARIOUS RECEPTIVE DELS. WE THINK THIS HAD BENEFICIAL EFFECT, AND HELPED PROMOTE GENERALLY CONSTRUCTIVE PARAGUAYAN PREAMBLE. (WE TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO GET PARAGUAY TO THROW IN EVEN STRONGER LANGUAGE, BUT THEY REFUSED, LARGELY BECAUSE ARGENTINA FELT IT MIGHT NOT FLY, AND, IN RETROSPECT, THEY WERE PROBABLY RIGHT.) EVEN PANAMA SPOKE IN FAVOR OF PARAGUAYAN PREAMBLE. FROM BEGINNING, WE CULTIVATED GOOD SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH CARIBBEAN DELS, WHO TURNED OUT TO BE NON-POLITICAL, UNBIASED, UN-INSTRUCTED ON CANAL ISSUE, AND HELPFUL. WE FEEL THEY COULD BE VALUABLE ALLIES AT MAR DEL PLATA AS WELL.

8. NETHERLANDS WAS REPRESENTED BY WATER EXPERT FROM ARUBA, BUT HE WAS TOLD TO KEEP SILENT AND DID SO, ONLY INTERVENTION WAS MADE BY EMBASSY REP RE PANAMA ISSUE. U.K., FRANCE, AND CANADA LIKEWISE REMAINED SILENT EXCEPT FOR PANAMA QUESTION.

9. PANAMA DEL CAME UNDER STRICT INSTRUCTIONS TO GET RESOLUTION ON CANAL ENDORSED. IT WAS APPARENTLY SUBJECTED TO CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE, BY SECRETARIAT AND ARGENTINE AND PERUVIANS DELS, TO (A) KEEP ISSUE OUT OF WORKING GROUPS, AND (B) TO DILUTE THE ORIGINAL, VERY STRONG RESOLUTION IT PROPOSED. ON BASIS OF ECLA HABITAT PRECEDENT, SO WE WERE TOLD, THEY CONVINCED PANAMA TO COME DOWN TO WHAT WAS FINALLY INTRODUCED.

10. SECRETARIAT CLAIMS SOME CREDIT IN RESPONSE TO OUR ANTI-BILATERAL ISSUE URGINGS TOWARD GETTING PARAGUAY TO DRAFT PREAMBLE WORDING. WE WERE OFFERED CHANCE TO STRENGTHEN IT AND TRIED, BUT PARAGUAYANS, AFTER CONSULTING ARGENTINES AND OTHERS, STUCK WITH ORIGINAL WORDING. PERHAPS THIS WAS POLITICALLY BEST, AS MUCH STRONGER
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WORDS MIGHT WELL HAVE RUN INTO SOME DIFFICULTY WITH PANAMA AND CUBA.

11. LATINS SEEM CONTENT SO FAR WITH MAGEED AND SECRETARIAT PREPARATIONS FOR MAR DEL PLATA; THEY RECOGNIZE HE HAS LIMITED BUDGET.

12. MAGEED STRIKES US AS RATHER WEAK LEADER. HE EXERCISED ESSENTIALLY NO REPEAT NO BEHIND-THE-SCENES LEADERSHIP HERE. HE WAS NOT REPEAT NOT ENTHUSED ABOUT OUR INTEREST IN KEEPING BILATERAL ISSUES AWAY FROM MAR DEL PLATA. HE IS STRONG ON INTERGRATED RIVER BASIN COMMISSIONS FROM HIS EXPERIENCE IN THE NILE, INCLUDING PRIOR CONSULTATION. (ARGENTINES LIKE HIM FOR THIS.) WE THINK HE LEANS TOWARD LDC INTERESTS IN ANY KIND OF DC-LDC CONTROVERSIES.

HE SEEMS TO BE STILL FEELING HIS WAY THROUGH THE U.N. MAZE.

13. THERE WAS NO REPEAT NO EXPRESSION OF CONCERN ABOUT SAFETY OF DELEGATES IN ARGENTINA, EITHER IN MEETINGS OR IN CORRIDER CONVERSATION, SO FAR AS WE ARE AWARE. MAGEED AND OLIVER WERE QUITE SATISFIED FROM WHAT THEY SAW IN ARGENTINA AND FROM ASSURANCES THEY RECEIVED THAT GOA WOULD DO WHAT WAS NECESSARY IN SECURITY LINE.

14. COMMENT: PROGRESS TOWARD MAR DEL PLATA CONTINUES REASONABLY WELL. LOW BUDGET CLEARLY INHIBITS SUCH THINGS AS TRANSLATION OF NATIONAL PROGRAM REPORTS. WHILE LIMA MEETING DID NOT DO TOO BADLY AT KEEPING EXTRANEIOUS ISSUES OUT, OUR EXPERIENCE HERE PLUS MAGEED ATTITUDE WOULD SUGGEST THAT SOME OF THESE WILL PROBABLY FIND THEIR WAY TO MAR DEL PLATA. SMITH UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, PLANNING MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE229278
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: IO/IEP:LEKAHN:JPS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760349-0426
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760952/aaaabsol.tel
Line Count: 185
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 226324, 76 STATE 227263
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAY 2004 by woolflhd>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ECLA PREPARATORY MEETING FOR UN WATER CONFERENCE
TAGS: SENV, OCON, UN, ECLA
To: ADDIS ABABA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006